

409.10 Minimum Standards for Providers of Conservation Technical Assistance Associated with Comprehensive Nutrient Management.

(a) A Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) describes and documents a conservation system within a conservation plan that is unique to animal feeding operations.

(1) At a minimum, a CNMP must address quality criteria to the sustainable level for soil erosion and water quality for the planning unit associated with the animal feeding operation. Conservation planning activities associated with the development of a CNMP, however, should attempt to achieve a CNMP that addresses quality criteria to the resource management system (RMS) level for all five natural resources (soil, water, air, plants, and animals).

(2) Any CNMP developed by an NRCS or partner employee must be signed and approved by an NRCS certified conservation planner with CNMP planner authority.

(b) A CNMP may be comprised of six possible elements (four of the six elements are required):

(1) Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage. This element is a required part of a CNMP and is usually signed off by an engineer with a CNMP certified specialist certification in this element. However, basic systems such as a compostor and dry litter storage can be signed and approved by a certified conservation planner with planning job approval authority for the practices.

(2) Land Treatment Practices. This element is a required part of a CNMP and is planned and approved by a certified conservation planner. The planner is certifying that all lands on which manure is spread is free of gully erosion, meets “T” tolerance levels for sheet and rill erosion, and setbacks and buffers meet water quality criteria at the RMS level.

(3) Nutrient Management. This element is a required part of a CNMP and is planned and signed off by a certified specialist for Nutrient Management. The nutrient management plan requires the specialist to conduct an inventory on all acres receiving land-applied manure as a nutrient supplement, utilize the P Index if applicable, and to develop a nutrient balance based on the amount of land on which the manure is applied.

(4) Record Keeping. This element is a required part of a CNMP and requires a certified CNMP Planner. This section would not require a planner signature. It requires the planner to define and inform the landowner of the record keeping requirements that must be maintained to meet state permit requirements, manage manure applications, and ensure that the CNMP plan is being followed and correctly implemented.

Part 409 – Conservation Planning Policy

TN409.10(b)(5)

(5) Feed Management. This element is only a required part of a CNMP in instances where land applied nutrients could be reduced by application of this practice standard. This plan will be prepared and discussed with the client by an animal nutritionist or someone certified to prepare this section of the plan.

(6) Other Utilization Options (Optional).

(c) All of the elements are technical in nature and require a certain level of acquired expertise. To adequately address a specific element of a CNMP would require the planning and implementation of conservation practices that address the resource concerns identified for that specific element. An individual that has demonstrated a competency in planning and implementing conservation practices associated with one or more of the specific elements of a CNMP would qualify to be designated a “certified CNMP specialist.”

(f) The State Resource Conservationist and State Conservation Engineer will review the training completed and at least one CNMP before designation and approval as a “certified CNMP specialist.” A list of employees and partner employees receiving the “certified CNMP specialist” designation will be maintained at the state level by the State Resource Conservationist. The “certified CNMP specialist” designations that will be maintained are:

- Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage.
- Nutrient Management.

(g) (1) General Requirements for Certification as a CNMP Planner:

(i) Be a certified conservation planner.

(ii) A localized knowledge of the NRCS conservation planning process comparable to the information contained in the NRCS Conservation Planning Course, Modules Six to Nine.

(iii) An awareness of agricultural waste management systems equivalent to the information contained in the NRCS Agricultural Waste Management Systems: A Primer Course.

(iv) The ability to use the contents of the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide as related to specific elements of the CNMP.

(v) A strong understanding of the criteria associated with the various elements of a CNMP as contained in the NRCS Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning Technical Guidance.

(vi) An understanding of the applicable State and Federal laws and regulations that impact the elements of a CNMP.

TN409.10-4(2)

(180-GM, Amend. TN7, May 2006)

(2) General Requirements for a “Certified CNMP Specialist” in Specific Elements of a CNMP. This subsection describes the requirements specific to certain elements of a CNMP. As a part of the certification process, the following competencies will be demonstrated for the following elements:

(i) Manure and Wastewater Handling and Storage. This element addresses the components and activities associated with the production facility, feedlot, manure and wastewater storage and treatment structures and areas, and any areas or mechanisms used to facilitate transfer of manure and wastewater. The following are required:

(aa) The planner must have knowledge adequate to plan, design and implement conservation practices typically used to address this element of a CNMP. The practices could include:

- Animal Mortality Facility (316).
- Closure of Waste Impoundments (360).
- Composting Facility (317).
- Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline (430).
- Manure Transfer (634).
- Roof Runoff Structure (558).
- Solid/Liquid Waste Separation Facility (632).
- Waste Storage Facility (313).
- Waste Treatment Lagoon (359).

(bb) The planner must have a strong working knowledge of the information contained in the NRCS Agricultural Waste Management Systems Level 2 Course, or equivalent.

(cc) When structural design and planning are required to modify existing or add new structures as part of this element, registration as a professional engineer in the state of Tennessee is required, or in the case of NRCS, hold appropriate engineering approval authority.

(iii) Nutrient Management. This element addresses the requirements for land application of all nutrients and organic by-products (e.g., animal manure, commercial fertilizers, crop residues, legume credits, and irrigation water) that must be evaluated and documented for each Conservation Management Unit. The following knowledge, skills, and abilities are required:

(aa) A working knowledge of the information contained in the NRCS Introduction to Water Quality Course, or equivalent.

(bb) Skill in using the State-approved nutrient risk assessment tool, which is AFO-Pro.

Part 409 – Conservation Planning Policy

TN409.10(g)(2)(iii)(cc)

(cc) Working knowledge of the information in the NRCS Nutrient and Pest Management Considerations in Conservation Planning Course, as it pertains to nutrient management, or equivalent.

(dd) Skill in developing a plan to address the nutrient management conservation practice in compliance with the NRCS Nutrient Management (FOTG Practice Code 590), and, as appropriate, Irrigation Water Management (FOTG Practice Code 449) conservation practice standard(s).

(h) Training. Training for any CNMP certification must be provided through NRCS training courses, on-the-job training, or equivalent courses and methods approved by the SRC and SCE as meeting the identified training requirement. The State Conservationist, in consultation with the Director, National Employee Development Center, will grant approval for course equivalency in lieu of an NRCS formal training course.

(i) Maintaining Certifications. Certified specialists are responsible for updating their own individual development plans to reflect training needed and to maintain or increase their skill levels. Training to maintain and update skills must, at a minimum, occur once every three years. The SRC and SCE will determine the type and minimum hours of training necessary to maintain the certified specialist designation.

(j) Quality Assurance. The SRC and SCE will address maintaining certified specialist certification programs in their “State Quality Assurance Plan.” A review will be made at least once every three years of each certified specialist designation. A sufficient number of plans and/or design reviews will be completed to determine whether the plans and/or designs developed and implemented will meet NRCS conservation practice standards and policy, and the intent of the Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan Technical Guidance. If an individual fails to meet the qualifications or criteria established for a certified specialist designation the status will be revoked by the certifying organization, and the individual must re-certify. Specific guidance will be provided to the employee on steps necessary to re-establish certification.

(k) Certified Specialists. The SRC will maintain a list of CNMP certified specialists.

TN409.10-4(4)

(180-GM, Amend. TN7, May 2006)